the handloom sector, the present package of schemes for production of value added fabrics will be streamlined; innovative market-oriented schemes will be introduced; and joint ventures encouraged both at the domestic and international levels. Brand equity of handlooms will be commercially exploited to the extent possible.

Merger of D.A. with Basic pay for NTC Employees

1792. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employees of National Textile Corporation have allowed merger of 50 per cent of D.A. with their basic pay, w.e f. October, 2006, while Government had allowed such merger w.e.f. January, 2004;

(b) whether this belated decision of Board of N.T.C. has affected the interests of the employees of NTC badly; and

(c) if so, whether Government would consider grant of the merger of 50 percent D.A. with the basic pay of the employees w.e.f. January, 2004, as has been done for all Central Government/PSUs employees, so as to cover the financial interests of the existing/retired employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) Government had allowed merger of 50 per cent DA with basic pay from 1.4.2004 to the CDA employees in Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs). However, as per Deptt. of Public Enterprises orders dated 24.5.2005, such merger shall be allowed to employees of those Public Sector Undertakings that are not loss making and are in a position to absorb the additional expenditure on account of merger of DA with basic pay from their own resources without any budgetary support from the Government. Accordingly, the Board of Directors decided to implement these orders w.e.f. 1.10.2006 only, after reviewing the performance of the Company for the year 2005-2006.

Demand and Supply of Raw Silk

1793. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN.: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a big gap between demand and supply of raw silk in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the production of raw silk in the country and the quantity imported during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Union Government proposes to take any steps to increase the production of raw silk in the country, to meet the demand indigenously; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the achievements proposed to be made thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There is a gap between the demand and supply of raw silk in the country. The status of production, demand/consumption and import of raw silk is given below:

Year	Total Raw silk Production	Import of Raw silk	Consumption of Raw silk
Unit	MTs	MTs	MTs
2003-04	15,742	9,258	25,000
2004-05	16,500	7,948	24,448
2005-06	17,305	8,383	25,688

(c) and (d) Government has taken various steps to increase production and productivity of raw silk in the country. Important steps are-production of new bivoltine breeds to produce international grade of Mulberry raw silk, developing new mulberry strains, tropicalising bivoltine silkworms, developing a new technical device for reeling of cocoons for improving productivity, implementation of catalytic development programme to support farmers/reelers, establishment of silk conditioning and testing houses etc.

Promotion of Traditional Weaving Craft

1794. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the names of various schemes being implemented by the Central